

# **\*\*ATTENTION\*\***

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## SNOW GOOSE FACTS

COMMON NAMES: White Brant, White Goose, Snow Goose, Blue Goose, Wavie1. (1) (2)

CLASSIFICATION: Chen caerulescens (Ken see-rue-LES-enz) (4)

DESCRIPTION: Adults: length 25 to 31 inches; wingspan 53 to 60 inches; bill 1.95 to 2.3 inches long, pink with white tip and black cutting edge; plumage white, except for black wing tips; feet and legs pinkish-red. Weight 6.06 lbs. male, 5.5 lbs. female. (1) (3) (4) (5)

DISTRIBUTION: Washington State: Snow Geese migrate through Western Washington, occasionally through Eastern Washington. Snow Geese have been observed wintering in the Puget Sound area. (1) (2)

BIOLOGY: Nesting range: Northern Canada and Alaska, primarily in tundra regions.

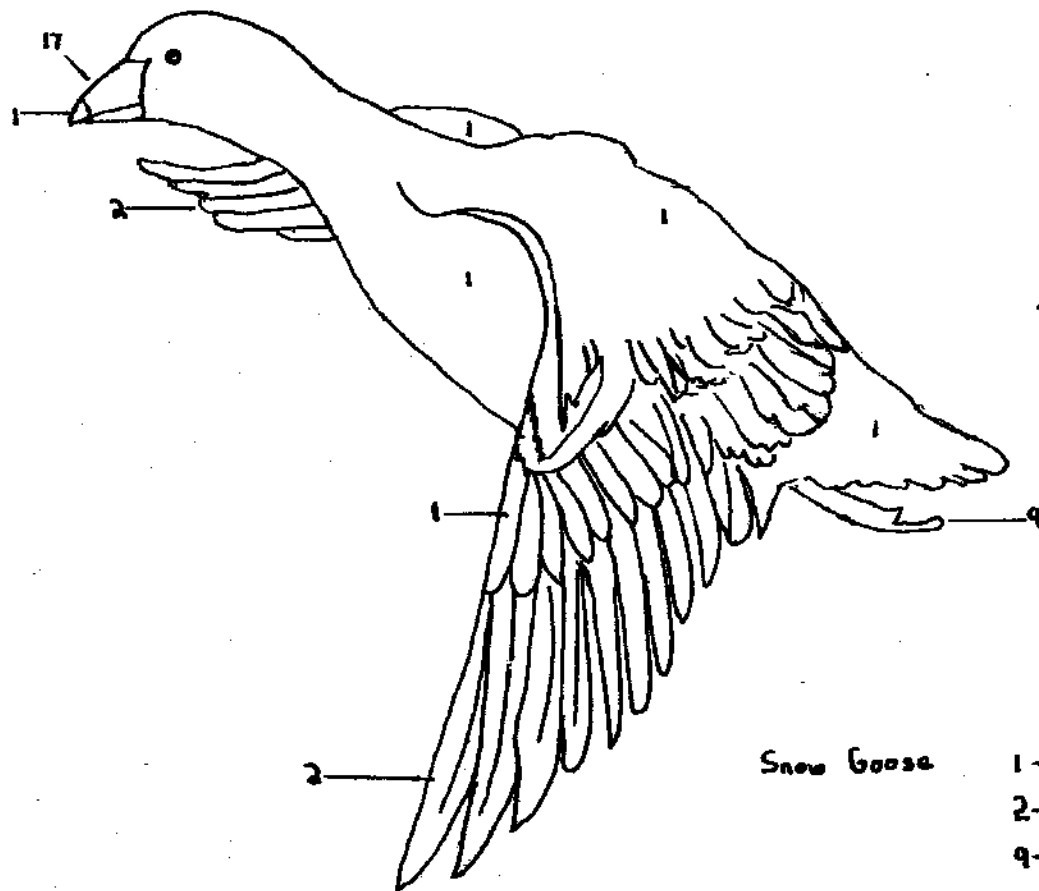
Nesting Period: Late May through July. Nest: Moss or gravel scrapes that are enlarged as more eggs are laid. Moss, willows, and grasses are added to old nests to form substantial raised structures. The female builds the nest alone and deposits a small amount of down in the bowl of the nest. Clutch Size: Four to seven eggs, laid approximately 1.3 days apart. Egg Color: White to creamy white, smooth with a fine granular texture. Egg Shape and Size: Elliptical to subelliptical, 79x52mm. Incubation Period: 22 to 25 days by the female. The male protects the nest site from other Snow Geese and predators. The female leaves the nest only briefly during early stages of incubation and seldom, if at all, in later stages. Adult females lose 25 percent of their body weight by the time the eggs are hatched. Number of Broods: One. Nestlings: Precocial. Both parents guard the hatch, but only the female broods the young. First Flight: Short flights as early as 35 days after hatching. Goslings are fledged at 45 days. Flight Speed: Timed at more than 50 m.p.h. Life Span: 15 years, 11 months in captivity; less in the wild. (1) (2) (5)

### Snow Goose Notes

The Genus, Chen, is the Greek word for goose. The species, caerulescens, is Latin, referring to the blue-gray wings of the blue color phase of the Snow Goose. Once thought to be separate species, the Snow Goose and Blue Goose are now combined under the name Chen caerulescens. (4)

### Bibliography

- (1) Bellrose, Frank C. - 1978, Ducks, Geese, and Swans of North America, pp. 112-123., Stackpole Books, Harrisburg, PA.
- (2) Harrison, Colin - 1978, A Field Guide to the Nests, Eggs, and Nestlings of North American Birds, p. 71., William Collins Sons and Co., Ltd., Glasgow, Eng.
- (3) Pearson, Gilbert, T. - 1936, Birds of America, pp. 155-156 Ch. I, Doubleday and Co., Inc.
- (4) Terres, John K. - 1980, The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds, pp. 193-194, Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
- (5) Udvardy, Rayfield - 1977, The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Birds, p. 443, Alfred A. Knopf, New York.



Snow Goose

1 - White

2 - Black

9 - Pinkish Red

17 - Pink